(a) the amount of grant-in-aid sought by the Karnataka Government towards the construction of hostel building for Boys of Taranath Ayurvedic Medical College, Bellary; and

(b) the amount, if any, released so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) The Government of Karnataka sought grant-in-aid in 1997 of Rs. 30.00 lakhs for construction of hostel building for boys and Rs. 100 lakh for purchase of library books at Taranath Government Ayurvedic Medical College, Bellary.

(b) Grant-in-aid could not be sanctioned as the utilization certificate and other related documents were not received from the institution in respect of grant of Rs. 30.00 lakhs sanctioned in 1993-94.

Direct financial assistance to Medical Colleges

†2930. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to extend direct financial assistance to all Medical Colleges including Muzaffarpur Medical College for imparting uniform medical education; and

(b) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) As 'Health' is State Subject, the Central Government has presently no Scheme under which direct financial assistance is extended to all the Medical Colleges including Muzaffarpur Medical College for imparting uniform medical education.

Vitamin A drops to children

2931. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any programme was/has been undertaken to give Vitamin A drops to children for taking care of malnutrition;

(b) if so, the utility of Vitamin A for this purpose; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) the response of Government theret?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) Under the Reproductive and Child Health Programme children in the age group 9 months to 3 years are given five doses of Vitamin 'A' in the form of a liquid preparation at six monthly intervals. This is done for prophylaxis against deficiency of the vitamin, which among other things, can lead to blindness. A National Consultation with experts held in September 2000 concluded that "In India, the magnitude of clinical Vitamin A Deficiency (VAD) has declined significantly but if exists as a public health problem in scattered pockets."

Seizure of spurious drugs

†2932. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the steps Government have taken to curb the trade of spurious and sub-standard medicines in various parts of the country;

(b) the States including Delhi where action has been taken against the manufacturers of spurious medicines;

(c) the worth of the spurious medicines seized during the last two years, State-wise; and

(d) the details of the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C. P. THAKUR): (a) Under the provisions of Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and Rules there under, State Governments have been empowered to enforce quality of drugs including check on manufacture or sale of spurious drugs. The said Act was amended in 1982 to provide for specific definition of spurious drugs and severe penalties extending to life imprisonment have been prescribed.

State Governments have been advised from time to time to provide adequate enforcement machinery and drug testing facilities and to keep strict surveillance over the inter-state movement of spurious drugs. Facilities of Central Government testing labs have also been made available to the States for testing of drugs besides financial assistance provided to them to augment and strengthen their testing capabilities.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.